

Agency Information

AGENCY : HSCA
RECORD NUMBER : 180-10110-10001
RECORD SERIES : SECURITY CLASSIFIED TESTIMONY
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : 008215

Released under the John
F. Kennedy
Assassination Records
Collection Act of 1992
(44 USC 2107 Note).
Case#:NW 54756 Date:
10-31-2017

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : HSCA
FROM : [Restricted]
TO :
TITLE : EXECUTIVE SESSION
DATE : 04/12/1978
PAGES : 42
SUBJECTS :
CIA, METHODOLOGY
[Restricted]
OSWALD, LEE, POST-RUSSIAN PERIOD, TRAVEL, TRIP TO
MEXICO
MEXICO CITY
DOCUMENT TYPE : TRANSCRIPT
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 3
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 01/01/2003
OPENING CRITERIA :
COMMENTS : Duplicate enclosed.Box 1.

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C O N T E N T S

TESTIMONY OF:

PAGE

Boris Tarasoff

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E X H I B I T S

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1978

U.S. House of Representatives,
 Subcommittee on the Assassination of John F. Kennedy of
 the Select Committee on
 Assassinations,
 Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:50
 p.m. in room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon.
 Richardson Preyer (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Preyer, Dodd, Fithian and
 Sawyer.

Also present: E. Berning, R. Morrison, G. Fonzi,
 J. Wolf, M. ^Flanagan, A. Purdy, J. Hornbeck, I. C. Mathews,
 G. Cornwell, W. Cross, H. Leap, M. Wills, D. Hardway, R.
 Genzman and C. Berk.

Mr. Dodd. The Committee will come to order.

For the record, we are continuing in Executive Session.
 Present are Congressman Fithian and myself, Congressman
 Dodd.

For the record, again, it should be noted that the
 witness is appearing of his own volition and not as a result
 of a subpoena and I would ask the witness to rise and be
 sworn.

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1 Would you stand up for me please, sir?

2 Would you raise your right hand?

3 Do you swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but
4 the truth?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, sir, I do.

6 Mr. Dodd. I am going to read -- first of all, I want
7 to ask you, Tarasoff, is that the correct pronunciation?

8 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

9 Mr. Dodd. First of all, Mr. Tarasoff, you have
10 received a copy of the rules of the Committee?

11 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, sir.

12 Mr. Dodd. You had an opportunity to look over those
13 rules?

14 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, sir.

15 Mr. Dodd. I am going, pursuant to our rules, at this
16 particular juncture, I am going to read, for your benefit,
17 the House Resolution 222, which was a resolution that gave
18 birth to this Committee, and that resolution states that
19 this Committee is mandated to conduct a full and complete
20 investigation and study of the circumstances surrounding the
21 assassination and death of President John F. Kennedy,
22 including determining whether the existing laws of the United
23 States concerning the protection of the President and the
24 investigatory jurisdiction and capability of agencies and
25 departments, are adequate in their provisions and enforcement,

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1 and whether there was full disclosure of evidence and
2 information among agencies and departments of the United
3 States government and whether any evidence or information
4 not in the possession of an agency and department would have
5 been of assistance in investigating the assassination and
6 why such information was not provided or collected by that
7 agency or department; and to make recommendations to the
8 House, if the Select Committee deems appropriate, for the
9 amendment of existing legislation or the enactment of new
10 legislation.

11 Now, Mr. Tarasoff, I am going to ask counsel, Mr.
12 Robert Ganzman who is sitting in front of you, to your
13 right, to proceed with some questions, after which Mr.
14 Fithian and myself may have some follow-on questions for
15 you.

16 We are grateful for your appearance before this Committee
17 and we will await your response to some of these questions.
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TESTIMONY OF BORIS TARASOFF

Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarassof, would you give your full name and address for the record?

Mr. Tarasoff. My full name is Boris D. Tarasoff, residing at the present time in the vicinity --

Mr. Dodd. Excuse me, I want to know for the record, you do not have counsel with you and, according to our rules, you could have counsel with you if you desire. I remind those that you are here that you could speak up a little louder. If you do not hear a question accurately, chirp right up and tell us you want us to speak louder.

Go ahead, counsel.

Mr. Genzman. Thank you.

Mr. Tarasoff, would you give your full name and address for the record?

Mr. Tarasoff. My name is Boris D. Tarasoff and the address is Bela Hora, Mexico.

Mr. Genzman. Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to introduce into the record a document to be labelled JFK Exhibit 94.

Mr. Dodd. Without objection, so ordered.

(The document referred to was marked JFK Exhibit No. 94 for identification and will be found in the files of the Subcommittee.)

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1 Mr. Genzman. Would the Clerk give this document to
2 Mr. Tarasoff?

3 Mr. Tarasoff, have you previously been shown a copy of
4 JFK Exhibit No. 94?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. A copy, the one that you gave us?

6 Mr. Genzman. I am directing your attention to the
7 document that the clerk just gave you, Mr. Tarasoff. Have
8 you previously been shown a copy of that letter which has
9 been labelled JFK Exhibit No. 94?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. Just this morning.

11 Mr. Genzman. Fine. You were shown a copy of the letter
12 this morning?

13 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

14 Mr. Genzman. Thank you.

15 Is it your understanding, Mr. Tarasoff, that this
16 document is a letter dated March 23, 1978 from the CIA which
17 authorized any individual who has executed the Secrecies
18 Agreement with the CIA or who considers himself bound by such
19 a secrecy agreement with the CIA to furnish this Committee
20 with information within its scope and jurisdiction?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

22 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Chairman, my questions will involve
23 three general areas. First, the CIA's surveillance opera-
24 tions in Mexico City around 1963. Then the CIA's surveillance
25 with specific reference to Lee Harvey Oswald's contacts with

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1 the Soviet and Cuban Embassies in Mexico City about this
2 time. And finally, identification techniques as applied
3 to the surveillance of Oswald in Mexico City.

4 First of all, Mr. Tarasoff, what is your present
5 occupation?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. Pardon me?

7 Mr. Genzman. What is your present occupation?

8 Mr. Tarasoff. I have retired from the service, seven
9 years ago.

10 Mr. Genzman. How long have you been retired, seven
11 years?

12 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

13 Mr. Genzman. Did you work for the CIA before your
14 retirement?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Oh, yes.

16 Mr. Genzman. Were you an agent, an officer or an asset
17 for the CIA?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. I was a staff officer.

19 Mr. Genzman. Could you detail for the Committee your
20 assignments with the CIA around the time of 1963?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. I started working in Mexico City in
22 June, 1963 and continued up until the end of October, 1970.

23 Mr. Genzman. Were you aware of any surveillance
24 operations conducted by the CIA in Mexico City?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. Well, I was aware, because -- may I

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1 qualify my statement, expand it a little bit?

2 Mr. Genzman. Would you repeat that, please?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. May I expand?

4 Mr. Genzman. Certainly.

5 Mr. Tarasoff. In 1960, I came to Mexico City to replace
6 a friend of mine who was working in the same capacity and
7 I stayed with Mexico City for four months in 1960 and I
8 went back to my regular occupation with DDI.

9 And that is the Documents Section, CIA. And after
10 that, I tried to be assigned to a job in Mexico City which
11 I finally succeeded in doing. So therefore, when this
12 friend of mine went back to Washington, I replaced him in
13 Mexico City in June, '63.

14 Mr. Genzman. What were your duties in Mexico City?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. You mean during my TDY or after?

16 Mr. Genzman. I am speaking about your duties regarding
17 surveillance operations in Mexico City. Would you tell us
18 what your duties were?

19 Mr. Tarasoff. My duties were on a less permanent --
20 on a more or less permanent basis -- to receive the tapes
21 first, then to translate from Russian into English the
22 conversation that was on the tape and to transcribe the
23 whole thing.

24 Mr. Genzman. Where did these tapes originate?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. The tapes originated right there in

1 Mexico City because some of the telephone wires leading
2 to areas, establishments, were tapped. Therefore, as a
3 result, we had these conversations on the tape.

4 Mr. Genzman. Were some of these tapes a result of
5 telephone taps on the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. Pardon, I did not hear the question.

7 Mr. Genzman. Were some of these tapes which you dealt
8 with the result of telephone taps on the Soviet Embassy in
9 Mexico City?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. That is correct.

11 Mr. Genzman. Were you responsible for the translation
12 or transcription of tapes from other operations besides the
13 Soviet Embassy operation?

14 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, there were several operations going
15 on as a result of which we got tapes also, but they were
16 taken of the so-called bugs, were planted in several strategic
17 spots, dealing with Soviet nationals. Therefore, I had to
18 transcribe them also.

19 Mr. Genzman. Did you work inside the American Embassy?

20 Mr. Tarasoff. The American Embassy?

21 Mr. Genzman. Yes.

22 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, when I was in TDY.

23 Mr. Genzman. I see. But as part of your transcription
24 and translation of these tapes, did you work inside the
25 American Embassy or outside of the Embassy in 1963?

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1 Mr. Tarasoff. In 1963, I was completely divorced
2 from the Embassy. We worked, so to speak, on our own.

3 Mr. Genzman. Did you have contacts inside the American
4 Embassy with whom you dealt in 1963?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. Well, we had the so-called contact man
6 who delivered the tapes and, the next day, he would pick
7 them up and deliver the next batch to be transcribed and
8 so it went, around the clock, with the exception of Sunday.
9 There was no delivery, but Monday I had double work to
10 do that included Sunday's and Saturday's.

11 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying that you would receive
12 tapes the day after they were made?

13 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

14 Mr. Genzman. And that you would deliver them the
15 following day, after you transcribed them and translated
16 them?

17 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

18 Mr. Genzman. Do you remember the names of any of your
19 contacts who either gave you the tapes or received the tapes
20 from you along with the transcriptions, when you were finished
21 with them?

22 Mr. Tarasoff. Well, the first contact was Radford
23 Zoronde. After quite awhile, his name was Rudy. I do not
24 know whether it was a pseudonym or a true name. That is all
25 I know about him.

1 Mr. Genzman. Do you know the nationality of the
2 person you believe was called Rudy?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. I think he was a Pole.

4 Mr. Genzman. Could you give us a description?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. Tall, receding forehead, light hair,
6 more or less regular featured, nothing outstanding about
7 him.

8 Mr. Genzman. Can you give any other identifying
9 information for Rudy, as to his family, possibly?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. He was married to a French woman and it
11 seemed that they did not get along. Whether she divorced
12 him after -- it was some kind of a mix-up in his family
13 life.

14 And the chief man recognized him by the fact he worked
15 in Indochina as a transcriber. His Russian was nonexistent
16 after I found out, so he was just coasting along.

17 Mr. Genzman. I would like to give you several pieces
18 of physical description and ask you if these fit the person
19 you referred to as Rudy.

20 Did this person have blond hair?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. As far as I recollect, I think so.

22 Mr. Genzman. Was his height 5 foot six inches?

23 Mr. Tarasoff. Pardon me?

24 Mr. Genzman. Was his height approximately five feet
25 six inches, or taller or shorter?

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1 Mr. Tarasoff. No. He was taller than I.

2 Mr. Genzman. I see.

3 Would you describe his face as being thin or full?

4 Mr. Tarasoff. As far as I remember, he was regular
5 size, but slightly slimmer.

6 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell me whether he spoke Russian?

7 Mr. Tarasoff. No, he did not speak Russian. As I
8 said before, his Russian was rather limited.

9 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying he spoke poor Russian?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. He had hardly spoken Russian.

11 Mr. Genzman. I see.

12 What exactly did you receive from your contact and
13 what exactly did you then give to this contact after you
14 were finished with it?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. After the tapes were processed by me,
16 at first, they wanted me to do the Spanish before, but there
17 was such a specific volume, I just could not cope with it.
18 So therefore, the Spanish was taken away from me and given
19 back to a place where they were recording it for the Mexican
20 personnel to transcribe it in Spanish, because most of the
21 people at the Embassy knew Spanish.

mr-1

1-12

fls. Tascione¹

H. Assassin. 2

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Mr. Genzman. Are you saying then that you did not, in fact, transcribe and translate the Spanish sections of the tapes?

Mr. Tarasoff. No, after a while I transcribed only Russian.

Mr. Genzman. As part of this operation, do you ever have occasion to have contact with a Mr. Herbert Monell?

Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, definitely.

Mr. Genzman. Can you tell me what his position was?

Mr. Tarasoff. He was an officer of some sort in charge of operations. What precisely he was doing I cannot describe because it was strictly his business.

Mr. Genzman. Did you ever have occasion to have contact with Anne Goodpastor^{ure} as part of your operation?

Mr. Tarasoff. I know the people, Herbert Monell, Goodpastor^{ure}, through my stay in Mexico City in 1960 because at that time, I was inside the embassy. I had to abide by the rules of the embassy, for instance, start work at 9:00 in the morning and terminate at 6. Sometimes there was so little work in transcribing the Russian portion of the tape that I was just hanging around doing nothing.

Mr. Genzman. In conjunction with your transcribing and translation operation, did you ever have occasion to make personality assessment or voice identification of the people whose voices you heard on the tapes?

1 Mr. Tarasoff. That was my idea that I suggested to them
2 after I came for my regular tour of duty, to have the voice
3 sample. The idea was rejected. On what grounds I do not
4 know.

5 Anyway, after about three or four months they did come
6 out with a suggestion that I start saving those voice samples.
7 I would put them on 8 millimeter reels, movie reels. At
8 first I had a -- I do my own movies. Then we had to run
9 around Mexico City looking for empty reels.

10 We got quite a collection of voice samples. Some of
11 them have been turned over to the embassy people. At the
12 end of my tour, of course, everything was turned over.

13 Mr. Genzman. Do you ever make personality assessment?

14 Mr. Tarasoff. Personality assessment?

15 Mr. Genzman. Personality assessment based on the infor-
16 mation which you heard on the tapes or based upon any emotions
17 you detected from the tapes?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. Will you be more descriptive if it does
19 not interfere with your time? The thing is Mr. Monell one
20 day suggested to me that I do the character study based
21 solely upon the audit part of the tapes. I thought it was
22 an excellent idea because this was a challenge to me, how to
23 describe a person solely upon his intonations, inflection,
24 et cetera, what he is talking about.

25 It was interesting work and I think it was appreciated

1 by the station because I got my promotion very shortly
2 thereafter.

3 Mr. Genzman. Thank you. Did you ever have any connec-
4 tion with the Cuban Embassy surveillance operation in Mexico
5 City?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. No.

7 Mr. Genzman. Do you know of any people, besides the
8 people you have already named, who were connected with sur-
9 veillance operations either in conjunction with the Soviet
10 Embassy or the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City?

11 Mr. Tarasoff. I cannot answer that. I do not know.

12 Mr. Genzman. In conjunction with the personality assess-
13 ment which you sometimes made based on what you heard from
14 tapes, do you have occasion to make comments on the transcrip-
15 tion sheet when you detected something about the person's
16 personality from the tapes?

17 Mr. Tarasoff. First, I used to make just a short
18 synopsis saying, well, "This fellow is saying in an agitated
19 voice", and so forth. I would inject some of my personal
20 feeling about a person. The station told me to eliminate
21 it because they did not want to see that. If I had anything
22 to say about a person, I should use a separate sheet of
23 paper for that purpose.

24 Mr. Genzman. Thank you. Were the transcripts which you
25 made original or did they include both originals and carbon

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mr-4

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1 copies?

2 Mr. Tarasoff. Carbon copies, I think. We made one
3 original and three at first, if I am not mistaken. Then
4 there was too much repetition, so one carbon copy was dis-
5 carded.

6 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying, then, that the procedure
7 was changed so that you had one original and two carbon
8 copies?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. I think that is correct.

10 Mr. Genzman. Thank you. What did you do with the ori-
11 ginal and the carbons?

12 Mr. Tarasoff. When my wife was picked up on the payroll
13 to continue her work with the CIA, her job was to mark down
14 the date and the embassy's telephone number or military
15 attache's number or whatever number it is. She was told to
16 put each conversation on a separate piece of paper and send
17 it to the station.

18 Later on there was such a mess of stuff being sent back
19 they said, "Can't you figure out which is pertinent and which
20 is superfluous and just superfluous? If somebody calls in
21 and blabs about inconsequential things, tear them up and put
22 them in the wastepaper basket." That is it.

23 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying your wife cut up at least
24 one of the copies of the transcript?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

1 Mr. Genzman. And sent those cut-up parts to the
2 embassy?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

4 Mr. Genzman. Was it the carbon copy she cut up and
5 sent to the embassy to be filed?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. One carbon copy was cut up. There were
7 two carbon copies and an original went back to the station.

8 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, were these transcriptions
9 you made literal transcriptions or sample conversations?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. I did not get the question.

11 Mr. Genzman. The transcriptions which you made, were
12 these original literal transcriptions or were they merely
13 summaries of conversations?

14 Mr. Tarasoff. Before when I arrived at the TDY, my
15 friends told me how it worked. It was this fellow calls up
16 and says this, that and the other, hang up. Herbert Monell
17 insisted I do everything verbatim.

18 Mr. Genzman. Besides the little translation which you
19 put on your transcript, did you include any comments?

20 Mr. Tarasoff. Sometimes, very short, because as I said
21 before, the long ones they frowned upon. "If you want it,
22 put it on a separate sheet of paper."

23 Mr. Genzman. What type of comments did you commonly
24 make?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. You mean the short form or what?

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1 Mr. Genzman. The short one.

2 Mr. Tarasoff. The short form, I said "Well, the fellow
3 seems to be agitated", for instance. That is all.

4 Mr. Genzman. Did you ever make these comments on sepa-
5 rate sheets of paper?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. After I started doing character studies,
7 I would just keep them and consult them whenever I started
8 doing one of the descriptive things.

9 Mr. Genzman. Would you have put any type of identifying
10 information on the transcript?

11 Mr. Tarasoff. Can you repeat the question?

12 Mr. Genzman. Besides the translation of the literal
13 conversation, did you have occasion to put identifying
14 information concerning the people who were speaking on the
15 transcript, itself?

16 In other words, if you could identify the people speaking
17 did you note that on the transcript?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. This is the way it worked. We knew
19 precisely who would be living, for instance, in the film's
20 office. If someone answers, we know it was the chief film's
21 official. Once you get used to the person's voice or how he
22 speaks and so forth, it was practically no trouble at all to
23 identify.

24 Mr. Genzman. On the transcript did you ever refer to
25 the speakers in any other ways aside from their names which

1 you identified?

2 Mr. Tarasoff. Would you clarify that question?

3 Mr. Genzman. Certainly. On your transcripts did you
4 ever use any other identifying information besides proper
5 names for the individuals who were speaking? Did you ever
6 know whether the speaker was inside the embassy or whether
7 the speaker was outside the embassy?

8 Mr. Tarasoff. Oh, that was very easy, especially if I
9 did not know who was speaking. If the call comes in, you
10 put down "Man Outside", "MO", or whoever answers from the
11 embassy you put down "MI", man inside.

12 Usually the calls to the embassy came to the small
13 booth in front of the gate. There were three people usually
14 on duty all the time. So, their voices I knew personally,
15 well, this fellow answers, whatever the caller wants, he
16 transfers the call to the main building.

17 Mr. Genzman. In your transcription do you ever make
18 comments as to the quality of the language spoken by the per-
19 son or did you ever make reference to any prior conversation
20 which that individual had made?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, I had to do that because sometimes
22 calls came in and the fellow speaks Russian. Well, you would
23 have to let them know exactly how he talks.

24 For instance, there were several Jewish merchants in
25 Mexico City who spoke Russian, either with a Jewish accent or



1 rather poorly. So I would make a comment to that effect at
2 first probably, because later on if this fellow called back
3 and forth, his wife wanted to have a fur coat and so forth,
4 you do not have to mention every time that he speaks with a
5 terrible accent when you knew exactly who the fellow was and
6 put down his name.

7 Mr. Genzman. Do you think at this time that you would
8 be able to recognize a transcript which you had made in
9 1963?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. It is a long time ago. I think I would
11 recognize my mode of typing it out.

12 Mr. Genzman. You mentioned earlier that your wife
13 helped you on occasion in your operations.

14 Mr. Tarasoff. That is right.

15 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell us exactly how she assisted
16 you?

17 Mr. Tarasoff. Usually there was some English-speaking
18 person on the line that did not need any translation, just
19 transcribing. Then I would ask my wife to listen. Of course
20 she had a much keener sense of hearing than I.

21 Consequently, she would take over and type out this
22 particular conversation. At first she was not working for
23 a year in Mexico City, but she was helping me out nevertheless.
24 After she was picked up, she gave me all the help necessary
25 to clip those entries and paste them on a paper and stamp the

1 date and so forth.

2 Mr. Genzman. Would it be fair to say that your wife
3 handled the English language conversation on the tapes re-
4 ceived and you generally handled the Soviet language conver-
5 sations on the tapes received?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, but sometimes if the conversation
7 was simple and not too long, I would do it myself.

8 Mr. Genzman. Which language are you referring to?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. English.

10 Mr. Genzman. Did anyone else assist you in your opera-
11 tion besides your wife?

12 Mr. Tarasoff. No. You see, I would like to explain, we
13 were completely removed from the embassy. If we got into any
14 kind of jam, we could not count upon the help from the embassy
15 or from the CIA. We were entirely on our own.

16 Mr. Genzman. At this time, Mr. Chairman, do you have
17 any questions concerning the general surveillance operation
18 in Mexico City which Mr. Tarasoff was involved with?

19 Mr. Fithian. Mr. Sawyer?

20 Mr. Sawyer. Not right now, Mr. Chairman.

21 Mr. Fithian. Mr. Tarasoff, you said you worked by your-
22 self and if you got into any difficulty you were not to indi-
23 cate any association with the agency or with the embassy?

24 Mr. Tarasoff. That is correct, sir.

25 Mr. Fithian. You mailed back the translations on a

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1 regular basis?

2 Mr. Tarasoff. It was not mailed. It was delivered
3 personally.

4 Mr. Fithian. So you went to the embassy daily?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. No. We had a courier, or whoever he was,
6 who would pick up the stuff and deliver the next batch to me
7 to be transcribed.

8 Mr. Fithian. How long did you work at this job? I
9 think you mentioned it earlier.

10 Mr. Tarasoff. How long I worked outside?

11 Mr. Fithian. Yes, in Mexico.

12 Mr. Tarasoff. About seven-and-a-half years.

13 Mr. Fithian. I have no other questions, counsel.

14 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, in the course of your duties
15 did Lee Harvey Oswald come to your attention?

16 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

17 Mr. Genzman. Do you remember the time?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. The time?

19 Mr. Genzman. Around what period did Lee Harvey Oswald
20 come to your attention as a result of your duties in the
21 surveillance operation?

22 Mr. Tarasoff. At the end of September I think it was,
23 1963.

24 Mr. Genzman. How did he come to your attention?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. First of all, he called -- as far as I

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1 recall, he tried to speak Russian but I think his Russian
2 was so poor that I did not understand. I cannot recall with-
3 out seeing the transcript

4 Mr. Genzman. When you say that Lee Harvey Oswald called,
5 are you saying he called the Soviet Embassy?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes. He called the Soviet Embassy as far
7 as I can remember. After that -- let us see what happened --

8 Mr. Genzman. Let me ask you this, Mr. Tarasoff. Are
9 you saying Lee Harvey Oswald's call to the Soviet Embassy in
10 1963 was picked up by means of this surveillance operation?

11 Mr. Tarasoff. I would say yes, I think that is what
12 happened. It was picked up on the tape.

13 Mr. Genzman. Did you translate and transcribe this
14 conversation which was picked up on tape?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes. As far as I remember there were
16 two conversations. There might have been more. I am not
17 certain.

18 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, at this time I would like
19 to show you several documents which deal with the Mexico City
20 surveillance operation and ask you to comment on it.

21 These documents, for information purposes for the Congress-
22 men, are contained on pages one, two, ten and eleven of the
23 packet of exhibits which was given to them prior to the
24 testimony.

25 Mr. Tarasoff, have you seen these documents before?

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1 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

2 Mr. Genzman. When were these shown to you?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. Yesterday.

4 Mr. Genzman. I would like to first draw your attention
5 to the document which is labeled page two at the bottom of
6 the page, in the bottom right-hand corner of the page. I
7 believe the first document you have in your hand is labeled
8 "P2". Do you have that document in front of you?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. Okay, thank you.

10 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell us what you know about this
11 document, Mr. Tarasoff?

12 Mr. Tarasoff. This was written by me.

13 Mr. Genzman. You are referring to the handwriting on
14 the left-hand side of the page which states "Lienvoy"?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. That is right. That is in my handwriting.
16 Now, the next line where it says "28 September, 63 and 156055"
17 was stamped by my wife. She was not employed yet and I had
18 to do it myself. She helped me to stamp this date and the
19 number of the Soviet Embassy below it.

20 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, do you remember transcribing
21 this particular conversation, and I would like to refer you
22 to the English speaking portion of the words on this page
23 beginning with "Please see the Spanish transcription"?

24 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

25 Mr. Genzman. Do you recall that this piece of paper was

1 part of your transcription operation, that is, do you recall
2 making this transcription?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. This part is not mine at the top. But
4 below it looks like the one I used, with slashes instead
5 of brackets.

6 Mr. Genzman. Would you explain what the slash marks
7 are used for?

8 Mr. Tarasoff. It is used to make reference to extra-
9 neous material which is not included in the speech. It is
10 like a comma.

11 For instance, "MO takes the phone and says in broken
12 Russian", that is my comment.

13 Mr. Genzman. Does this transcription agree with your
14 recollection of the conversation involving Oswald? Does
15 this page of transcription agree with your recollection of
16 a conversation involving Lee Harvey Oswald and a person in the
17 Soviet Embassy in Mexico City?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. I can safely say that it does, but of
19 course at that time, we did not pay too much attention to
20 this business because we had several callers who would speak
21 in English or try to practice their Russian. Anyway, since
22 this was of no importance I did not bother to expand.

23 Mr. Genzman. You stated earlier that the transcription
24 states that person spoke in broken Russian. Does this agree
25 with your recollection of Oswald's voice on the tape?

1 Mr. Tarasoff. Unfortunately I cannot recall the tone
2 of his voice or what he said.

3 Mr. Genzman. Can you recall what language he used?

4 Mr. Tarasoff. If he used Russian, it was unintelligible.
5 That is why they probably got somebody who could speak English
6 later on.

7 Mr. Genzman. As a result of this conversation, were
8 you able to identify the person speaking as Lee Harvey Oswald?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. I can remember two conversations that
10 were spoken by Oswald.

11 Mr. Genzman. I am referring to the first conversation,
12 to the first document.

13 Mr. Tarasoff. The first conversation, yes, I think
14 that is the one I have done.

15 Mr. Genzman. I am referring to this document and this
16 document alone at the moment. From this particular document
17 which relates to a conversation, were you able to determine
18 that the speaker was Lee Harvey Oswald?

19 Mr. Tarasoff. I would have no idea who was talking at
20 that time.

21 Mr. Genzman. I would next like to refer you to page
22 10, the document labeled "P10" at the bottom right-hand corner.

23 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, I have it.

24 Mr. Genzman. Could you identify this document?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. It looks exactly like the way I would do it.

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1 It was inconsequential at the time. It could have been just
2 a mistake in phone number. I do not know why he called this
3 particular number if he knew the previous embassy number.

4 Mr. Genzman. Aside from this document do you have any
5 independent recollection of this type of conversation?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. This particular one?

7 Mr. Genzman. Yes.

8 Mr. Tarasoff. No, it was rather run-of-the-mill conver-
9 sation.

10 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, I would next like to direct
11 your attention to the document labeled "Pl" in the bottom
12 right-hand corner. Could you identify this document?

13 Mr. Tarasoff. This is definitely mine.

14 Mr. Genzman. What makes you say that?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Because I underlined -- maybe I will
16 start from the beginning.

17 We got a request from the station to see if we can pick
18 up the name of this person because sometimes we had a so-called
19 "defector" from the United States that wanted to go to Russia
20 and we had to keep an eye on them. Not I -- the station.

21 Consequently they were very hot about the whole thing.
22 They said, "If you can get the name, rush it over immediately."
23 Therefore, it is very seldom that I underlined the name be-
24 cause I put them in capitals. In this case I did because it
25 was so important to them.

1 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell us exactly what lead to this
2 request?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. What?

4 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell us exactly what lead to this
5 request?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. I have no idea what lead to it. That
7 was my only main point, to find the name, to get the name of
8 this person and deliver it as soon as possible to the station.

9 Mr. Genzman. Can you speculate as to why this request
10 was made?

11 Mr. Tarasoff. It would be simply a speculation. If he
12 called the Cuban Embassy and our people knew about it, then
13 they really would be pressed to get the name.

14 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying then that there is a possi-
15 bility that Oswald spoke to the Cuban Embassy personnel in
16 addition to the Soviet Embassy personnel and that the people
17 you dealt with in your operation made that connection and
18 consequently made an urgent request that this person be
19 identified?

20 Mr. Tarasoff. There is a possibility, I think, that
21 that is exactly what happened.

22 Mr. Genzman. Again, can you tell us what features con-
23 cerning this document labeled "P1" at the bottom lead you to
24 believe that it was done by you?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. Which one, "P1"?

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1 Mr. Genzman. Yes. You stated earlier that "Lee Oswald"
2 is underlined?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

4 Mr. Genzman. Do you remember this conversation indepen-
5 dent of this document?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. Independently, no.

7 Mr. Genzman. Do you remember whether Oswald spoke English
8 or Russian during this conversation?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. As far as I remember, he was speaking
10 English. Whenever he did slip a couple words of Russian in,
11 it must have been unintelligible.

12 Mr. Genzman. There is a comment between slash marks on
13 this page which states, "The same person who phoned a day or
14 so ago and spoke in broken Russian".

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

16 Mr. Genzman. Are you now saying that you believe that
17 this person spoke in English and not in Russian?

18 Mr. Tarasoff. I believe he spoke in English.

19 Mr. Genzman. Based on this possible discrepancy, do you
20 have any feeling as to whether this document is authentic as
21 opposed to being a forgery or an amended version of the
22 original document?

23 Mr. Tarasoff. I cannot conceive of this document being
24 a forgery. I have an idea in the back of my head that it was
25 much stronger. There is the whole thing, the spacing, I

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1 cannot say that it was longer than it is now.

2 Mr. Genzman. Do you recall this conversation as includ-
3 ing more substance than is in this document which you have
4 before you, labeled "P1"?

5 Let me rephrase that. Do you recall items in the con-
6 versation ---

7 Mr. Tarasoff. Items?

8 Mr. Genzman. Items, topics, in the conversation inde-
9 pendently of this document which you do not see in this
10 document.

11 Mr. Tarasoff. Unfortunately I do not. I am not certain.

12 Mr. Genzman. Do you have any independent recollection
13 of Oswald having mentioned his financial situation during
14 this conversation?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. No, I do not have any recollection of
16 that. The main idea was to get the name of the person for-
17 ward as soon as possible.

18 Mr. Genzman. At the beginning of this conversation there
19 appears "In at" and "168" which is crossed out. Do you see
20 that, Mr. Tarasoff, the number 151?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. I put a question mark at the time.

22 Mr. Genzman. Can you tell us what that would mean?

23 Mr. Tarasoff. The question mark means that I did not
24 get the time when the call came through.

25 Mr. Genzman. Do you have any explanation for that feature?

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1 Mr. Tarasoff. No.

2 Mr. Genzman. Can you also tell us what the words "pre-
3 viously transcribed" mean?

4 Mr. Tarasoff. "Previously transcribed" means, for in-
5 stance, I went to the embassy first and the embassy number
6 was 605055. Now this number 501264 belonged to the film's
7 office. So consequently if that particular call went out of
8 the main building to the film's office and it had been tran-
9 scribed before, that is exactly what I would do, put down
10 "previously transcribed". So there was no question of doing
11 it twice.

12 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, you mentioned earlier that
13 this transcription has the words "Lee Oswald". Were you
14 able to identify the speaker in an earlier conversation
15 based on this conversation? I would like to refer you back
16 to the document labeled "P2".

17 I believe you said earlier that the conversation contained
18 on "P2" did not contain any identifying information.

19 Mr. Tarasoff. It was just a repeat job at first.

20 Mr. Genzman. Were you able to identify the individual
21 speaking on "P2" by means of this conversation on "P1"?

22 Mr. Tarasoff. "151. The same person who phoned a day
23 or so ago and spoke in broken Russian". That is the one right
24 here.

25 Mr. Genzman. You are saying from this conversation you

1 identified the speaker as Lee Oswald? Did you also make the
2 inference that the speaker of the conversation at page "P2"
3 was also Lee Oswald?

4 Mr. Tarasoff. No, because -- this is the 28th of Sep-
5 tember -- it is out of my hand. But the next one is October
6 1st.

7 Mr. Genzman. Let me rephrase the question. The October
8 1st conversation contains the name Lee Oswald, does it not?

9 Mr. Tarasoff. It does.

10 Mr. Genzman. The September 28 conversation does not
11 contain a name?

12 Mr. Tarasoff. It does not contain the name. That is
13 probably why they wanted to know the name.

14 Mr. Genzman. So, at the time you received the September
15 28 conversation you could not make any identity of the speaker?

16 Mr. Tarasoff. No.

17 Mr. Genzman. After you saw the October 1st conversation
18 which contained the name Lee Oswald, did you then make the
19 inference that the speaker in the September 28 conversation
20 was Lee Oswald, the same speaker who spoke on October 1st?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. I guess he called up and just previous
22 to that called the embassy and identified himself. I think
23 it says -- I was not sure whether this particular number was
24 a military attache' or anyway it is one of the Soviet's.

25 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, I am asking whether you at

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1 any time were able to identify the speaker in the September
2 28 conversation?

3 Mr. Tarasoff. No.

4 Mr. Genzman. Did you ever make the inference that the
5 speakers on September 28 and October 1st were one and the
6 same person?

7 Mr. Tarasoff. I sure did, right here, under item 151,
8 under "P1".

9 Mr. Genzman. Thank you.

10 Mr. Fithian. Mr. Tarasoff, I did not follow you exactly
11 where you made that indication.

12 Mr. Tarasoff. It is on "P1" and starts at 151 and then
13 I have slash marks, "The same person who phoned a day or so
14 ago and spoke in broken Russian". That particular sentence
15 refers to the "P2".

16 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying then that you were able to
17 make the connection between the two speakers based on your
18 recollection of the voice from the September 28 transcript?

19 Mr. Tarasoff. Exactly.

20 Mr. Genzman. Would you also state whether the language
21 on "P1", the October 1st conversation, I quote "I was at your
22 place last Saturday and spoke to the consul", did that
23 language also contribute to your inference that the September
24 28 speaker was the same as the October 1st speaker, namely
25 Lee Oswald?

1 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes.

2 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, do you recollect any other
3 conversation or any other details about Lee Harvey Oswald's
4 calls?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. Unfortunately I do not recollect any more
6 conversations.

7 Mr. Genzman. Can you say whether you remember any
8 other calls by Oswald or any other details which are not
9 reflected in these documents, the three we have shown you?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. To be frank I do not remember any other.

11 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, I would like to ask you a
12 few more questions concerning voice comparison. Did you as
13 a routine procedure identify the voices of the participants
14 in the conversation if you could?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Would you repeat that?

16 Mr. Genzman. Did you identify the voices of these people
17 speaking if you were able to do so? Would you identify them
18 on the transcript?

19 Mr. Tarasoff. I certainly would because some of them,
20 it was not difficult, you could not mistake them for anybody
21 else.

22 Mr. Genzman. As part of this procedure, did you ever
23 make use of identification tapes and comparisons between
24 tapes?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. No. They wondered whether I could preserve

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1 the voices, take the voice samples, cut out the section of
2 the tape.

3 Mr. Genzman. Were you able to identify any of the people
4 with whom Oswald spoke during this conversation?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. Here, for instance, "Pl", the first, a
6 Obyed Kov was a guard at the gate. Usually they changed
7 every eight hours. The first call comes through him. Con-
8 sequently, Lee Oswald was talking to Obyed Kov. He said that
9 he does not remember the name of the consul who was speaking
10 to him and yet it was probably Kostikov. It says, "My name is
11 Oswald".

12 Mr. Genzman. Were you at any time asked prior to the
13 assassination of President Kennedy whether you could identify
14 any of the people who spoke to Oswald?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. Would you repeat that, please?

16 Mr. Genzman. Did anyone ever ask you to make any identi-
17 fication of the people who spoke with Oswald at any time
18 before the assassination of President Kennedy?

19 Mr. Tarasoff. You mean from our field office?

20 Mr. Genzman. Yes.

21 Mr. Tarasoff. No. No one approached us.

22 Mr. Genzman. Did anyone ask you after the assassination
23 to make any identification of the speakers in these transcripts?

24 Mr. Tarasoff. Again I would say no, not that I can re-
25 collect.

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1 Mr. Genzman. Did anyone ever ask you to compare tapes
2 to try to identify any of the speakers in any of the conver-
3 sations?

4 Mr. Tarasoff. No. Sometimes those tapes would be erased.

5 Mr. Genzman. Did Ann Goodpastor^{or} ever contact you regard-
6 ing the surveillance operation on Oswald?

7 Mr. Tarasoff. No.

8 Mr. Genzman. Do you happen to know Ann Goodpastor's
9 function in Mexico City?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. She was a pretty important person as far
11 as I can judge because she was with the chief of the station
12 and they kind of favored her quite a bit.

13 Mr. Genzman. Would you say she worked closely with the
14 chief of the station?

15 Mr. Tarasoff. I would say so because -- well, she was
16 one who was getting one of the carbon copies. Another one
17 went to Rose -- I do not remember her family name.

18 Mr. Genzman. Are you saying then that Anne Goodpastor^{or}
19 was involved in the telephone surveillance operation in
20 Mexico City?

21 Mr. Tarasoff. Not the telephone surveillance. She was
22 busy with something else but, anyway, she kept the records.

23 Mr. Genzman. You are saying that she did receive one
24 of the carbon copies of your transcription?

25 Mr. Tarasoff. Yes, when I was working inside the

1 embassy on TDY I had to give one copy to her, one to Rose
2 and I think one went someplace else, the original went to
3 the chief.

4 Mr. Genzman. Do you know whether AnneGoodpastor^{u e} had
5 any knowledge of the photo surveillance operations in Mexico
6 City?

7 Mr. Tarasoff. I believe she did.

8 Mr. Genzman. Did she work with the surveillance opera-
9 tion directly, to the best of your knowledge?

10 Mr. Tarasoff. Let me digress a bit. As I remember,
11 there was a sort of flurry between all the employees at the
12 station. What was happening, they were trying to recruit
13 one of the defectors.

14 They tested everything, walkie-talkies and stuff like
15 this. One day the place was practically empty. I thought,
16 "What happened?" I did not know.

17 When I came back a few hours later, they did return with
18 such a dejected air that I did not know what the heck happened.
19 Then it was explained by somebody that said that this opera-
20 tion fell right through on its face.

21 Naturally I know AnneGoodpastor^{u e} felt badly about it and
22 the chief and everybody else was concerned.

23 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, referring you back to the
24 document labeled "Pl", you stated earlier you were able to
25 determine that Lee Oswald spoke in this conversation and that

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1 he, in fact, identified himself during this conversation?

2 Mr. Tarasoff. That is right.

3 Mr. Genzman. Did you at any time or in any manner indi-
4 cate to any of your contacts in Mexico City, which other
5 conversations were those of Oswald besides "Pl"?

6 Mr. Tarasoff. No. I passed the whole shebang to the
7 contact, in fact, we had to call a special meeting. In other
8 words, we got the name and immediately had to work on this
9 one. I sent the whole thing back.

10 I thought okay, if they got the tape, everybody should
11 be able to listen to it because it is in English. Whatever
12 broken Russian he spoke was terrible.

13 Mr. Genzman. In characterizing your contact with the
14 Lee Harvey Oswald case would you say that any of your contact
15 with the case was out of the ordinary, aside from the request
16 to your subsequently transcribing the conversation on "Pl"?

17 Mr. Tarasoff. Would you repeat that, please?

18 Mr. Genzman. Certainly. We have been discussing docu-
19 ments allegedly dealing with conversations which Lee Harvey
20 Oswald had with the Soviet Embassy. Would you characterize
21 your handling of these conversations as in any way out of the
22 ordinary other than your previous statement that you received
23 an urgent request to do one of the transcriptions?

24 Mr. Tarasoff. Well, the two previous ones were just in
25 the ordinary course. We had a suspicion that Lee Oswald

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1 could have been a defector, according to this. To me it was
2 a routine thing to do, to type up all this transcription and
3 send it back to the station. Then came the request to see
4 if I could get the name the next day.

5 So, when I got this particular name, which I underlined
6 to bring their particular attention to it, I sent it back
7 to the station with the reel. They would like to listen too.
8 They had all the facilities at the station for doing so.

9 Mr. Genzman. Other than your contact with members of
10 this committee were you ever at any time contacted by any
11 government agency, the CIA, the FBI, the Warren Commission,
12 or any other agency to explain your connection with the sur-
13 veillance operation against Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico City?

14 Mr. Tarasoff. Not a word from anyone.

15 Mr. Genzman. Thank you.

16 Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions at this time.

17 Mr. Fithian. Mr. Sawyer?

18 Mr. Sawyer. No questions, Mr. Chairman.

19 Mr. Fithian. Do I understand that this completes the
20 entire questioning of the witness by counsel?

21 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Chairman, we will have several more
22 questions after either you or any of the other Congressmen
23 have concluded with their questions, if you have any.

24 Mr. Fithian. I have no questions on this segment of the
25 witness' testimony.

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1 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Tarasoff, do you have any independent
2 recollection of any other conversations involving Lee Harvey
3 Oswald which you dealt with other than the three documents
4 we have been discussing today?

5 Mr. Tarasoff. If there were any conversations outside
6 of this, I do not recollect.

7 Mr. Genzman. Do you have any recollection of any other
8 subject matter which Oswald discussed in any conversation
9 other than the ---

10 Mr. Tarasoff. Personally, no.

11 Mr. Genzman. Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions.

12 Mr. Sawyer. You answered as to whether you had any
13 recollection of any other subjects that were discussed. You
14 said, "Personally, no". Is there any significance to the
15 word "personally"? Do you have information on it some other
16 way?

17 Mr. Tarasoff. Well, my wife thinks that there was another
18 conversation, but I do not recollect it.

19 Mr. Sawyer. Did she say what she thought it was about?

20 Mr. Tarasoff. Pardon me?

21 Mr. Sawyer. Did she say what she thought the other con-
22 versation was about?

23 Mr. Tarasoff. She said there must have been another one,
24 a much longer one than this.

25 Mr. Sawyer. That is all I have. Thank you.

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1 Mr. Preyer. Thank you very much. We appreciate your
2 being here.

3 We will take a five minute recess at this time.

4 (Whereupon, the subcommittee adjourned at 5:00 p.m.)
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